

## **Our Little Family by ForeverDream2012**

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**Summary:** A bunch of one shots featuring the Byers! More information inside. Taking requests. Contains a lot of family moments, and abuse in chapters that may feature Lonnie. Chapter 1- Jonathan tries to give Will the perfect birthday.

## 1. Perfect Birthday

Hey, guys, so some of my readers may have noticed I write a lot of brotherly/family moments in my favorite series, and this is another one of those! I'm also working on some friendship one shots for all Stranger Things characters, but this one is for the Byers family. Will contain a lot of brotherly moments between Jonathan and Will, and fluffy family moments for the whole family. May contain Jopper in future stories, along with Jane and Hopper being a part of the Byers family (I'm pretty sure that's going to happen in season 3). Anyway, enjoy, and feel free to leave requests!

Also, for this story, I'm not exactly sure where Hawkins would fit on the Indiana area, so I took a guess and made it near Princeton. If I'm incorrect, I apologize.

Perfect Birthday Present

Jonathan's POV

March 22, 1985

I stop the car at Melvald's General Store, and walk towards the store, where my mom is helping a customer. She looks tired, but at the same time, content. There's a cold breeze, but it's not nearly as bad as it has been. Indiana seems to be cursed with terrible and unpredictable weather, but no matter what, I'm going to make today perfect. It's Will's birthday, and I want him to have a good day. I bought tickets for *The Secret of the Sword*, a movie he mentioned he wants to see, and it comes out today. I bought them for a movie theater in a nearby town, Princeton, Indiana. That way, we can see the movie in peace, without anyone knowing who we are. I got him his present, and planned the whole day so everything is perfect and he gets to just be a kid.

"Hey, sweetheart.", Mom hugs me, the moment she finishes it up with the customer, who thanks her before leaving. "Do you have the tickets?"

"Yeah, and enough money to get him dinner and some time in the arcade.", I pause. "Are you sure you can't get some time off to go with us?"

"No, Donald needs me to work today. I'm sorry. But you two go have fun, you deserve it."

"Alright. I'm about to go pick him up from AV club. Mr. Clarke got Will a cupcake and they wanted to see him for his birthday."

"I'm happy he has good friends."

"You and me both.", I reply, and another customer walks in. "I better go pick up, Will. I'll call you when we get to Princeton."

"Alright, have fun, and stay safe. If you need anything, call the store, and if you can't get a hold of me, call Hopper.", she tells me, and I nod.

"Alright, Mom, don't worry, we'll be fine.", I assure her, and she hugs me before going to help the customer. I walk out of the store and to Hawkins Middle. Once I get there, I park the car and make my way in the building. I don't have to think about where I'm going, I know exactly where the AV room is. I get outside the door, and hear the party singing happy birthday. I open the door quietly, and see Will rather embarrassed, while his friends sing happy birthday to him and Mr. Clarke hands him the cupcake. I smile and Will blows out the candle to make his wish.

"Jonathan!", Will smiles, and I return it. Mr. Clarke looks at me, and we both nod at each other. I have great respect for the man, helping find Will without realizing it and always supporting the boys' and their love for science. I get out a rectangular box, with the tickets inside, and hand it to Will.

"Happy birthday, buddy.", he opens it and finds the tickets.

"How did you get these?", he asks.

"I have my ways.", he hugs me tightly, and I return it.

"Will, you better not ruin the movie for us.", Dustin warns.

"Seriously.", Lucas agrees, and he laughs.

"You guys knew about this?"

"Duh, why do you think we rushed you in here? We were on a time limit.", Max replies, and Mike nods his head.

"We better get going, bud.", he nods, and says goodbye to his friends, and then thanks Mr. Clarke for the cupcake. We begin to head out, and I grab his backpack, while he tells me about his day.

"Mike's working out the plans for a campaign, and Max tried to show us how to ride her skateboard."

"How did that one work out?"

"Not so good.", he laughs. "Then Mr. Clarke's class was awesome as it normally is.", we get in the car, and I put in his favorite mix tape.

"It's about a thirty minute drive, but I thought you'd like to see the movie, go to the arcade, and grab something to eat all in peace. We get to be normal for once.", he smiles brightly at the idea. "It's just me and you, though, I hope you don't mind. Mom had to work."

"I don't mind.", he assures me, and I smile. I make a right, and he turns up the radio, *Should I Stay or Should I Go* blasting, and he's nodding his head, with a wide smile on his face. I try to keep my eyes focused on the road, but I can't help but smile and laugh at my younger brother. For the first time in awhile, he's acting like a regular kid. "Thanks for all of this."

"Well, I have to make sure you have the perfect birthday, don't I?"

"Yeah, but you went all out.", he replies, and I shrug my shoulders.

"It's not a big deal. I just want you to have a good day.", I reply, and get on the interstate. He smiles, and I ruffle his hair. "You're my brother and best friend, Will. You deserve the perfect day."

"You're the best big brother ever, Jonathan. For real."

"For real?", I ask, and he nods his head. I laugh.

"Seriously. You've always been the best older brother anyone could ask for.", I smile genuinely and pull him in a one armed hug.

"Yeah? That's because you deserve the best.", I tell him, truthfully. He smiles, and we go back to listening to music, and soon enough we arrive at Princeton Theater. We get in, and I let Will order whatever he wants, while I call Mom and let her know we got here safely. We end up with a large Dr. Pibb, popcorn, and candy. Will carries the drink, and I carry the other two and we make our way to our seats. Once the movie starts I kinda zone out. I'm not really into this type of movies, truth be told. But Will wanted to see this movie since the day he found out it came out on his birthday. I just focus on the parts that I know Will would want to talk about. I occasionally look over, and see Will watching the movie with fascination.

Once the movie is over, Will and I step out of the theater, and he still has some of the candy left. We get in the car, and I look at him.

"Arcade first, or dinner?"

"Arcade.", he answers, as though it isn't a question, and I nod. I drive to a nearby arcade, and we spend the next few hours playing Pac'Man, Galaga, Dig Dug, Zaxxon, Spy Hunter, and Dragon's Lair. He ends up getting the highest score on most of them. I smile, until I see a father playing games with his son, and for a moment, my mind wanders back to Lonnie. How he was so unsupportive of Will, and how bad the abuse got before I snapped. I could have killed Lonnie right then and there for touching Will. How could he not love Will? I get I'm not the best son, but my God Will's a little genius, who doesn't get into trouble, and just wants everyone around him to be happy.

No, no thinking of that man. This is Will's birthday. Don't think about that. I continue to watch my younger brother play, and once he's done he looks at me.

"Can we get some food?"

"Yeah, good idea. Any ideas?"

"Burgers?", I nod.

"Alright, let's go.", we walk out and drive to a restaurant, where Will and I can eat a meal out in public in peace for the first time in months.

"How's things with you and Nancy?", he asks, out of the blue, once we hand the waitress our menus.

"It's going good.", I answer. It's the truth. Nancy and I are still going strong, even without the world hanging in the balance. "How's school?"

"It's going."

"What does that mean?"

"Kids still aren't too ready to accept me back yet. I feel like even more of an outcast."

"There's nothing wrong with you. Kids are just cruel. Don't let them bring you down."

"I never do. You and the others don't really give me the chance."

"That's because you're the last person on earth who needs to be brought down. You're a great kid, Will."

"Because you helped raise me to be. You and Mom. I guess the party had some help with that, too. But you and Mom were the biggest role models."

"Is that so?"

"Yeah, everything you did for me, and you still do. Even when Lonnie was around, you made sure every day that I knew I was loved. And when he left, you stayed out in the pouring rain to make Castle Byers because I was too stubborn to go back inside. You made sure that I was safe, and Mom did everything she could to make ends meet.", the waitress shows up with our food, and I thank her, but am unable to find the words to speak to Will. He takes a bite of his burger, and we start eating. "I never really thanked you... for what you had to go through, so I wouldn't have to."

"I'd do it all over again. You don't have to thank me for doing my job.", I reply. Once we finish, I pay the bill and leave the tip with the waitress, and then head out. Will lets out a yawn. We get in the car and I reach out in the back seat and hand him a wrapped gift. "I imagine it'll be too busy at your party this weekend to give you this."

"Jonathan.", he looks at me, and I smile.

"Just open it.", he does so, revealing a wooden box, full of sketch pencils and good coloring pencils, along with a leather sketchbook. "I know how seriously you've been taking drawing lately, and you're one of the most talented artist I've seen, even with your age. I thought you would like the materials to advance it more.", he puts down the gift and hugs me tightly. I return it, and when he lets go, he examines the sketchbook and pencils. "I know you can do anything you put your mind to, Will. And I know you have the talent to take this far.", I start the car, and drive home. We don't play the music as loud, instead Will curls up against the passenger seat and begins to fall asleep. When we stop at a red light, I quickly take off my jacket and put it over his sleeping form, and drive the rest of the time in silence. When we get home, he barely opens his eyes, and I chuckle and help him out. Mom waits in the living room for us.

"Hey, how was your day?"

"Best birthday ever.", Will suddenly seems wide awake, and begins to tell Mom everything. His smile never vanishes, and Mom smiles as well, and looks at me.

"I'm going to get some rest, buddy. I'm glad I was able to help give you a good birthday.", I ruffle his hair, and he nods. I hug Mom goodnight, and when I finally get in bed, I sleep at peace, knowing I was able to give Will the birthday he deserved.

## 2. A Much Needed Talk

A long talk between Jonathan and Hopper. Also the next story I'm working on I'm a little hesitant on posting. Would you guys read about a fight between Jonathan and Billy? Thanks ahead of time. Here's the story.

Jonathan's POV

I wake up to the soft sound of Will crying in his room. My mind immediately becomes alert, and I dart to my brother's side. When I walk in, I find no harm has come to him, but he's in the middle of one of his nightmares. I sigh, and kneel beside his bed and wrap my arm around him, soothing him, but not waking him up.

"It's alright, it's alright, bud. I'm right here. Nothing's going to hurt you while I'm here. I won't let it.", I tell him softly, running a hand through his hair. "I got you. I got you, buddy."

"Jonathan.", he mumbles, but doesn't quite wake up. I shush him, and soon enough, he's taking nice, calm, even breaths. I lay his head back down on the pillow and wrap the cover around him. He curls up, and falls asleep. I smile to myself. It's been forever since he's gotten any actual rest.

"I'm never going to let anything take you away from me again, little bro, so you can sleep easy.", I whisper, even though he couldn't hear me. Deep down, I know I don't have the power to protect Will, but I'm not going to be stupid enough to let something take him away again. I'll fight another Demogorgon, or those Demodogs if I have to. They'll have to kill me before they get him again.

I sigh, and walk out of his room, now wide awake, so I go to the kitchen for something to drink. Much to my surprise, Hopper is at the kitchen table, drinking a cup of coffee.

"What are you doing up?", he asks.

"I was about to ask you the same thing.", I grab a water bottle from the fridge then sit beside him. "Will was crying in his sleep."

"Poor kid, I just couldn't sleep. I've been checking in on your mom and Jane for the past half hour. Didn't know if you or the kid were light sleepers or not, so I left you be."

"We both are lately.", I inform him, and he nods. I peak in on Jane, who's fast asleep on the couch. "She can have my bed if she wants. I'm probably not going to sleep tonight anyway."

"I'm not going to wake her up. She hits you with the closest thing to her, no matter what the size.", he informs me, and I nod, making a quick, and smart, decision to leave Jane be. "You alright, kid?"

"What do you mean?", I'm not the one that got taken to the Upside Down, possessed, called crazy, or anything that my mom and Will went through. I was just the shit older brother who wasn't there when Will needed him the most. I can just imagine him running in the house yelling for me that night.

"Cut the shit with me, okay?", he takes another drink of his coffee. "I know when a kid is falling apart, and I'll be damned if I'm going to let that happen to you.", I didn't bother asking how he knew that.

"It's stupid."

"Try me.", he replies, and I smile slightly, but couldn't help but feel uncomfortable. I've never really had a male adult take interest in what I have to say. Besides Bob, and we all know how bad I fucked that up. I won't ever get the chance to thank him for what he did for my family. "Kid, come on."

"I... I'm a piece of shit.", I tell him, and he just looks at me. "I fuck everything up, Hop, everything I touch. My mom says Lonnie used to be a decent guy, then I came along and ruined a marriage to the point where...", I stop, and take a deep breath. "I'm a piece of shit older brother, who doesn't deserve Will. I mean, he's probably the best kid ever, and I would know. He needed me, Hop, he needed me there when that thing took him. Then when I leave again he gets possessed and if Mom and Nancy weren't there I would have let him die because I was too weak to watch it leave him. I let Lonnie take away part of his childhood. I didn't believe my own mom, the one person who never gave up on me, and I gave up on her. What if I had

convinced her to stop looking? Will wouldn't be here right now. I can't do anything right by this family. I'm no better than Lonnie.", I don't know how long I've kept that locked up, but the words flow out of me like nothing. I don't know why I'm telling Hopper of all people it, but I am. He listens, and at first doesn't say anything.

"You know, Will brags about you.", he tells me, as he grabs a cigarette from his pocket, lights it, and has a long drag. "Told me about how you stayed up all night and built Castle Byers because he wasn't too good at it. Or how you protected him from Lonnie."

"You know about...?", I don't even have to finish.

"Yeah, I know about what Lonnie did. And I know you ain't like him.", he pauses again and looks me right in the eye. "That boy in there thinks the world of you. Your mom doesn't blame you for not believing her about Will. Hell, she admitted she sounded crazy, because that's what this situation is, crazy. You were grieving and hurt, and it's okay. You weren't there that night because you wanted to help out with money. You fought a fucking Demogorgon just because you thought it would help us get Will back and protect me and your mom while we were in the Upside Down. You did what you could to protect your family from Lonnie, even though you lost your childhood. You are not Lonnie, kid, do you understand me?", I look at him for a moment, completely speechless. "Your mom's right, you act like you're alone in this world. You're not, kid. You have a mom in there who would do anything in the world for you and a little brother who knows what you've done and what you go through to protect him, and loves you more than anyone else."

"I just wish I was there, to save him from what happened.", I confess, saying the one thing that's heavily been on my mind for two years.

"That was beyond your control. If you had been taken instead of him, you would probably be dead. He's good enough at hiding, you're not. That thing would have got you, and I think you know that.", he tells me, and I don't say anything to the comment, mostly because I know it's true. I would be dead if it had been me. I look at the unopened water bottle with tears in my eyes.

"I just wish I could take the pain from him, Hop. I wish I could feel it

instead. He can't even get through one night without a nightmare."

"He's healing. This sorta thing just takes time.", he grabs my shoulder, and we smile at each other slightly. "Lonnie was always a piece of shit, by the way, he just hid it from your mom."

"What if he comes back?", I ask him, a question I would never ask my mother, or bring up in Will's presence. Hopper is surprisingly easy to talk to.

"I'll take care of it."

"How?"

"I'll take care of it, okay?", I nod. "Everything's going to get better. I know it will."

"I hope so, Hop."

"Just trust me, kid.", he tells me, and I nod again, and find myself actually trusting Hopper on this one. "You're a good kid, don't forget that."

"Thanks, Hopper.", I smile a bit. He returns it, finishes up his coffee, and looks at me.

"No problem, kid, now get some sleep.", he orders, and I nod again. I go back into my room, after checking on Will one last time, and lay back down. Hopper and I never mention the conversation again, but I did feel more comfortable with him spending the night after that.

### **3. Don't Touch My Brother**

Jonathan and Billy fight. Inspired by a conversation between a couple friends of mine. We were debating who would win in a fight between them and whether or not it would happen in season 3. Overprotective Jonathan, brotherly moments between Jonathan and Will. I didn't know how to write this exactly so you will be seeing both Will and Jonathan's POV, further explanation at the end of the chapter.

#### **Will's POV**

Since everything's died down, Mom is starting to let me walk with my friends again, and ride our bikes to Mike's house. The rule is that Jonathan has to pick me up from there, but that's no big deal. Right now, I'm riding my bike with Dustin, Lucas, Mike, and Max. Dustin and Lucas are debating over something stupid, Max is riding her skateboard down the street, and Mike is riding beside me, not saying anything, we're both just enjoying the peace. I smile at my friends, and realized I miss hanging out with them like I used to. Ever since the Upside Down, nothing has been the same.

"What do you think, Will?", I look up at Dustin.

"I'm sorry, I wasn't really listening.", I apologize, and he nods his head.

"Mike?", he calls over me, but Mike isn't paying attention. He stops his bike, and we all do the same. I listen closely, and hear a car engine, speeding.

"Get out of the way!", Max screams, and I hit the side of the road just as a car flies past us and makes a halt. Billy jumps out of the car, with a smirk on his face.

"Well, well, what do we have here?"

"Billy, are you crazy!? You could have-"

"Shut it, Maxine.", he snaps at his step sister. Lucas goes to reach out for her. "You know, the folks would be pissed if they knew you only

hung around guys."

"Billy, go away.", Max says, and when I see the look of fear she has, my mind flashes back to Lonnie. I remember hiding behind Jonathan. I hate that she knows that fear. I hate it with a passion.

"What did I say about telling me what to do? It makes me mad. You don't like it when I'm mad, do you?"

"Leave them alone.", I snap, as I step in front of Mike.

"Will.", Mike warns. Billy turns around and faces me.

"What did you say, Zombie Boy?", I feel my body shaking, as he reminds me too much of my father, but I do what I can do keep my voice steady.

"Leave them alone."

"I wonder how many times you can come back from the dead.", he grabs my shirt and slams me against the side of his car. He hits me once in the face, but I don't cry.

"Billy, let go of him!"

"Let him go!", I hear Lucas, Dustin, and Mike scream at once. My body will never be back to full strength due to what happened at the Upside Down, so the hit alone was enough to hurt me.

"Not so tough now are you?", Billy throws me against the concrete and kicks me in the ribs a few times. I hear the sound of a car stopping again. There's a sound of a car door slamming.

"Get the fuck off of him!", oh God. Jonathan.

Jonathan's POV

I just got my little brother back from the Upside Down, otherwise known as hell for us. During his disappearance and recovery, I've had to plan his funeral, mourn over his "death," fight a Demogorgon just to give my mom a better chance of finding him, assist in the shutdown of the government facility that did this to him in the first

place, and too many other things that haunt me in my nightmares. It haunts him, too, and more often than not he ends up in my room, with tears pouring down his face. And while I want to believe this will get better, I know it may not. I know he's going to be afraid of this the rest of his life, and truth be told I don't blame him. All I can do is be there for him, and he the brother he needed me to be two years ago, moments before he was taken to another dimension.

Right now, I'm driving from school to the Wheeler's house, to meet Nancy. Will said he didn't know if he was staying for AV or not, but told me he would be with his friends at all times, and would be at the Wheeler household by 5:30. As I drive however, I see Billy's car stopped in the middle of the street. Since it's after hours, no one really goes on the road, but still. And then I see Mike, Dustin, and Lucas screaming at him, while Max hits Billy. I can't see Will. Someone is on the ground, but I can't tell who, and I look at the side of the road to see the boys' bikes. I stop the car, and jump out, and see Will on the ground. My mind blazes with anger, and I could kill Billy at that moment.

"Get the fuck off of him!", I demand, as I run over and throw Billy away from my younger brother.

"Jonathan.", Will tries to get up, but Dustin and Mike have to help him. The side of his forehead is bleeding, and his arm is torn up. He clutches his stomach. I spin around and punch Billy in the face.

"Wow, who knew Byers could throw a punch?", Billy smirks.

"Jonathan, don't."

"Kick his ass, Jonathan!", Dustin snaps. Billy tackles me against his car, and I hit him in the back of the head. He punches me in the stomach, and when I nearly fall I upper cut him. He stumbles back, and growls.

"You're going to pay for that one.", he charges again and I hit the ground, and bust my head against the concrete.

"Jonathan, no!", I hear Will scream.

"Will, stay back!", Mike snaps at my younger brother, and Billy lands one punch in my face before I grab his arm and bend it backwards. Lonnie was a worthless piece of shit, but he did teach me to fight at least. I kick Billy off of me, and he hits me again, and neither one of us gets up, but continues to fight. He reaches for something and before I can react, he hits me in the head with a rock. I hit the ground, with a splitting headache, and try to focus.

"Jonathan!", I open my eyes, to the best of my ability, and feel someone grab my shoulders. Will looks up at me, panicked. "Leave him alone!"

"You know, Zombie Boy, I'm getting really sick of you!", Billy goes to hit Will, and by reflexes I grab his arm and shove him off. When he hits the ground I hit him again and again until Will grabs me again. Billy's face is covered in blood, much worse than what mine has to be.

"Jonathan, he's had enough! Stop!", I do so, but grab Billy's shirt.

"Listen, you're to stay away from my brother and his friends. No more causing shit. Stay away from them.", I order, and he just glares at me as I shove him back down. "I can't fit all of you in my car, but if you want a ride home, Max, Will and I will give you one."

"It's fine, Jonathan. I think Billy is going to leave us alone now, and I don't want to go home yet."

"We'll call Will over the walkie talkies if we need you.", Lucas assures us, and I nod. Billy gets up, and the kids go behind me, but Will stands directly behind me, holding my arm tightly. My mind wonders back to Lonnie.

"Will, get in the car. Guys, you can head out.", I tell them, and all of them listen. Will hesitates, but goes to the front seat of the car, and waits for me. Once the kids are out of earshot I glare. "You know, having a piece of shit father doesn't excuse what you do."

"What would you know?"

"I know a lot. I know your father beats the shit out of you. I know

what it does to you. But that's still no damn excuse. You either become a victim or change the situation if it's so fucked up."

"Like you did with Lonnie?", everything around this town stays forever and everyone knows about it, even new people. So it doesn't surprise me when he brings Lonnie up.

"You want to go there? You think it's going to hurt me? Yeah, he beat the shit out of me a few times, but I didn't let that make me a monster. I grew past the pain to be the person Will needed me to be. I get it fucking sucks, but you have to do something about it, otherwise nothing is going to change. And hurting those who may actually be able to give a fuck about you isn't the way to do it you damn psychopath. It's just going to turn you into him."

"I'm not like him."

"Really? You beat on kids you know doesn't stand a chance against you. And as far as I'm concerned you're both pieces of shit.", I reply, and glare. "Next time, don't let it be my little brother. No one fucking gets away with laying a hand on him. Stay away from his friends, too.", I warn, coldly, and walk off. He doesn't stop me, nor attacks me again. I get in the car, and Will doesn't say anything to me at first. I look at my eye injury in the mirror, wondering if it's okay to drive or not. "I'm going to try driving. But if I can't, I'm going to pull over, alright?", he nods, and I start the engine. My head is still pounding, but I'm able to focus a little better.

"Thanks... for saving me.", I look over at Will.

"It's my job, buddy.", I reply. "Here, let me see.", he looks at me, and I see the gash on his forehead won't need stitches, but definitely needs to be bandaged. He has serious road rash on his arm. "Let's get you home and cleaned up."

"What about you?"

"We'll worry about that later, okay?", I reply, and drive us home. I focus on the road carefully, and try not to get us into a wreck or anything of the sort. When we arrive home, we both step out of the car and head inside. Mom and Hopper are in the living room, and

look alarmed when we walked in.

"Jesus! What happened!?", Hopper demands.

"Are you guys okay?", Mom asks.

"Can you help Will get cleaned up? I don't feel so good.", Mom takes Will by the shoulders, both of them sending one last worried look at me, and Hopper helps me on the couch.

"What happened?"

"I was driving to the Wheeler's house when I saw Billy hurting Will. I guess they were heading to Mike's when Billy stopped and he was messing with them, and he hurt Will. I pulled up and got out of the car and we fought."

"Did you win?"

"He hit me with a rock. But his face was bloodier than mine.", I answer. Hopper grabs the extra first aid kit and starts helping me.

"Well, he didn't hit you too hard with the rock, but I wouldn't say he was nice about it either.", I wince as he cleans the wound. "You shouldn't need stitches, but stay up for the next couple of hours, and leave your door open tonight so I can check in on you without waking you, got it?"

"Yes, sir.", I answer, and he nods. We don't talk for a moment. "Will's going to be alright, right?"

"You looked way worse than him and you'll be fine."

"I mean with his recovery. Do you think...?"

"He'll be okay, kid.", he assures me, and I nod. "I heard that Billy kid is trouble."

"Messes with Lucas a lot apparently. I just snapped when I saw him with Will."

"I don't blame you a bit for that, kid.", he replies, and I try not to

remember Lonnie hitting Will and me snapping. "Alright, you should be okay. I'm going to get you some pain killers, cause that looks like it hurts like hell."

"It does.", I reply, but have a small smile on my face, and he nods, and leaves the room. After he returns and I take the medicine, I try to relax, but find it nearly impossible. I walk in my room, and Will joins me after a few moments.

"Are you okay?"

"Yeah, buddy. What about you?"

"I'm okay.", he promises, and I nod.

"Good."

"I'm sorry you had to save me again. I just saw how afraid Max was, and I thought of Lonnie, and..."

"You don't have to apologize to me. I'm glad you stood up for your friends and did what you thought was right.", I assure him, and he hugs me. I return it, and even though my body aches, I act as if it's nothing. "I'm just glad I got there before it could get worse."

"Me too.", he replies. "It was pretty cool."

"Really?", I smirk and he nods with a small smile. "Well hopefully that ended the Billy situation for you guys."

"What about him and Tommy?"

"Well, Tommy never did anything to me after the whole Steve fighting thing, and I got him good, too."

"But do you think they'll leave you alone now?", hell no. I can't lie to my younger brother.

"Don't worry about them, they're idiots."

"You had to save me, though."

"And I would do it again.", I reply, instantly. "Don't worry about me, Will. They're not going to do anything to me.", he nods. I wince at my head pounding.

"Are you okay?", Will asks.

"Yeah, bud, I'm fine.", I answer, and he hesitates but nods. "Don't give yourself a hard time for this. You didn't do anything wrong."

"Feels like I did."

"You stood up for your friends."

"I caused my older brother to get into a fight and hit with a rock."

"Billy caused that. You didn't.", I reply. He nods. "I'm proud of you for sticking up for what you believe in. And I'm always going to be in your corner to make sure no one gives you shit for it."

"You're the best brother ever.", he smiles.

Alright, sorry this one was rather long! I wanted to do both POV's because I felt that in order for Jonathan to be mad enough to fight Billy, Will would have to get hurt. But the issue I found when trying to write it was I believe that if Will was able, he would have his brother walk away. And if Jonathan had been there when Will was injured, he wouldn't have allowed it to go too far. So, I had to have Jonathan come right in time to save it from getting too bad, but not soon enough where Will didn't get hurt. Sorry, I hate hurting Will, too. Hope you guys enjoyed. I'm already planning the next chapter!

## 4. You're Not Alone

Will learns how his brother holds himself responsible for what happened in the Upside Down, and just how much his brother has been struggling in general. Also, if you guys have any requests at all, just let me know because I'm trying to get more inspiration for this!

Jonathan's POV

Senior year is supposed to be the best time of your life. There's the parties, the preparing for the next chapter of your life, the excitement of graduation. I want to be happy about this, but I just can't. There's this weight on my shoulders that hasn't gone away since I was a kid, but now the guilt that comes with it is overbearing.

"Hey, Jonathan, how's your freak brother?" Tommy asks me, with a small smirk, as I walk towards my locker. I roll my eyes and try to keep moving, but he cuts in front of me and causes me to stop. "Hey, I just wanted to know how Zombie Boy's doing."

"Don't call him that." I snap. I've never heard that nickname before Will told me about it, but after that it came around my school and has stuck. People rarely say it in front of me, Steve, or Nancy. Despite Steve and Nancy breaking up and me and her getting together, Steve keeps it cool with me. He's starting to mentor Dustin a lot more, so he's around the kids, including Will.

"What's wrong? Can't a guy just be concerned?" he taunts, and I roll my eyes and go to move again. "You know I don't really believe the whole lost in the woods bullshit."

"Well, that's what happened. Whether you believe it or not isn't my concern."

"I always thought you did something to him. You know, maybe you take after Lonnie more than what you want people to think."

"I'm nothing like that prick and I would never hurt my brother. Are we done with this conversation?"

"Chill out, Byers, all he did was say what's on his mind." Billy comes from behind me, and I glare at him. He still has his lip busted from our fight, but I still have the cut from where he hit me with a rock.

"Just leave me alone, alright?" I try to walk away again. There's no reason to fight either of them. I only punched Billy because I saw him hurting Will, and that's enough to make me want to murder anyone. But Will is safe at his school, with his friends.

"Fine, Byers, but remember, we know ways to get your attention." I shove past Tommy and get to my locker, grab my book, and walk to class.

People look over at me, and a few show expressions of disgust as I walk pass. Nancy is sick today so it's just me. The school day drags on, some people throwing paper at me in class, some idiot calling me "the freak's brother" during lunch. I want to turn around and tell him to shut up, but that'll just cause more trouble and Will doesn't like it when I fight. Then when I head back to the locker to put everything away, a newspaper clipping of Will's supposed death is taped on, with the words "Zombie Boy" with his eyes scribbled out, and on the back, "I wonder how many times he can come back from the dead." Dustin told me Billy said that to Will before I got there the day we fought, so there's no doubt in my mind that he's behind that.

I rip the paper up and throw it in the trash before heading to my car. I can't remember if Will has AV Club today or not. I'll just drive over there to check just in case. Once I get in his school's parking lot, I see Billy a few rows down from me, smoking a cigarette. He doesn't mess with Max too much anymore, and from what I know he's left Will and the others alone since our fight. I get out of my car and wait for Will. If Billy's here, that means Max has to head home so most likely no AV Club. Sure enough, Will comes out of the school building a few moments later. He looks up at me, smiles, and waves, and I do the same. I just want to get home and listen to some music.

"Hey, Jonathan." Will walks over but stops after getting a good look at me. "What's wrong?"

"What do you mean, bud?"

"You're upset."

"How do you know that?"

"It's just a brother thing I guess." he answers, and we both get in the car.

"Billy's left you guys alone, right?"

"Yeah, he hasn't said much to any of us."

"Good." the note on my locker is still in the back of my head, but Billy wouldn't be dumb enough to go after Will again. I'll make sure he doesn't get the chance to go for a cheap shot or cheat again. "How was school?"

"It was pretty good. What's wrong, though, Jonathan, seriously?"

"It's nothing, Will."

"We don't keep secrets from each other, Jonathan, that's one of our rules."

"Just a shitty day, bud, I'm okay." the rest of the drive is spent with the radio playing. I want to make conversation, but I'm just not up to talk, and Will understands when I get like that. His presence alone is comfort enough. I get us to the house, where Jane is watching TV, dying to be outside already. Only another two months now, and she'll start school with the others next August. She won't have to hide anymore. Mom is in the kitchen, and we both walk over and give her a hug.

"Hey, Jane." Will smiles, and the two begin talking while I walk into the room that Will and I now share. Jane took his old room. I collapse against the bed and take a deep breath, the energy to move leaving my body. Before I know it, I fall into a restless sleep.

*"Jonathan?" I look over and see my little brother a few feet from me, starting at me with lifeless eyes. His blank expression sends a chill down my spine.*

*"Buddy? Are you hurt?"*

*"Like you care." he gives a humorless laugh, and I reach him, and kneel down beside him and grab both of his shoulders.*

*"What are you talking about? Of course, I care."*

*"If you cared, you would have been there."*

*"What?"*

*"If you cared about me, you would have been there when that thing took me. I needed you, Jonathan." he answers, and looks down. "I needed you there. I needed you after that, too. You let it get me. You don't care about me."*

*"Will, I care about you more than anything, bud, come on. If I had known-."*

*"You would have known if you were there, Jonathan." he cuts me off, and then he starts to fade.*

*"Will? Will!" soon enough my little brother disappears in front of me, and I can't stop it. Then his screams fill the dark silence around me. "Will! Where are you? Will!"*

*"Jonathan? Jonathan, come on, wake up." I jump awake, and the first thing my blurry eyes focus on are my younger brother's eyes, full of concern, but most importantly, life. Will's worried expression clears my mind. "You were mumbling in your sleep and you were getting really upset."*

*"I'm okay, buddy." I assure him, but that doesn't ease his mind a bit.*

*"What's going on? Seriously, just tell me. You never were afraid to tell me anything before." his voice has the slightest hint of desperation in it. I look at him, and then sigh, with a humorless laugh.*

*"I'm sorry, bud. I'm so, so sorry."*

*"For what?"*

*"For being such a shit brother. You needed me and I wasn't there to protect you like I should have been."*

"What are you?- Do you mean that night? Jonathan, you can't possibly blame yourself for what happened."

"It's hard not to, Will. I made a promise to protect you. That I would never let anything happen to you." I raise myself up and run a hand through my hair. "I thought I lost you, bud, and I couldn't ever imagine anything worse. I don't care about those idiots at my school, yeah, they're a small obstacle, but when I thought that you were gone, it's like I lost everything. And I was just trying to be strong because I knew how much it hurt Mom." I wipe a few tears away. "Sometimes, I just don't know how much longer I can be strong for you guys, and that terrifies me."

Will doesn't say anything at first. Instead he hugs me. He wraps both of his arms around me tightly and I instinctively return it.

"Then let me help you. You're not alone in this world like you think you are, Jonathan. You always got me." he says and doesn't quite let go of me. I smile. Will's always been one to try to comfort others and try to make everyone happy.

"What did I ever do to deserve you, buddy?" I chuckle, as I feel a burden be lifted from my shoulders. Will's here. Will's alive and okay. Keep it that way.

## 5. Can I Tell You a Secret?

So, I finished ST season 3, and I absolutely loved it. Inspired by a conversation between me and my sister. Will comes out to Jonathan.

Will's POV

I try to ignore the sinking feeling in my chest as I walk towards my older brother's door, taking a moment to listen if Nancy was in there or not. She isn't, so I hold my breath and knock.

"It's open." Jonathan calls from the other side and I open it with a trembling hand. It's Jonathan, Will. If you can't tell him, then who can you tell? This is your brother.

As I walk in, I don't say anything. Instead I just keep myself steady. Jonathan looks up from his desk where pictures are scattered and sees me. At first, he gives me a smile but then sees the way I stand there, and it fades quickly.

"Hey, bud, everything alright?" he asks, studying me.

"Yeah, I think so." I answer, finally gaining the ability to speak. "I was just wondering if we could talk?"

"Yeah, sure." he drops the picture in his hand and sits on his bed, and I sit beside him. "What's up?"

"Do you remember when you said I could tell you anything and there wouldn't be any judgement?" I ask, and he raises an eyebrow.

"Yeah, why?"

"I just, um, I want to tell you something, and no one else knows. And I don't know how to say it, and I'm really scared for anyone to know, but if I don't tell someone soon I'm going to actually lose my mind." everyone has girlfriends now. Jonathan himself does. Oh my God this was a terrible idea. But I can't go back on it now, can I?

"Will, bud, you don't have to be scared to tell me anything. There's no judgement here." Jonathan says, gently, and I look over at him. It's

Jonathan. He helped raise me. He fought for me. He cares about me. I know that. I know I can count on him. But still. This isn't normal, even for me.

"I'm, um, Jonathan, I don't like girls." I blurt out quickly, and he doesn't say anything right away, instead makes sure he heard me correctly. "I'm sorry-."

"Why are you apologizing?" he asks.

"Because I-I can't be normal in any way and now- I mean, what am I going to do, Jonathan? What am I going to do?"

"You're going to live your life exactly the way you want." he answers. I feel tears burning in my eyes and Jonathan grabs my arm. "Will, you don't have to cry. It's alright, bud, really."

"No, it's not. People around here hate me enough, but you know what they would do to someone like me. You know how people will react."

"I know no one in this town is going to touch you."

"You don't know that."

"Will, no one in this town is going to hurt you, do you understand me? I won't let that happen." he says, with a very serious tone, and then pulls me into a hug while I try to stop crying.

"You-you don't hate me?"

"Bud, there isn't a damned thing in this world you could do to make me hate you." he chuckles and that gets me to stop. "Look, buddy, it's alright, it really is. You're right, there are going to be people who are narrow minded when it comes to this, but the ones who really matter are going to love you regardless. And you never have to worry about me hating you, because I'm always going to be in your corner."

"Thanks, Jonathan." he lets go of me and I wipe the rest of my tears away and smile at my brother.

"Always."

"Can we not tell anyone?"

"We're going to do what you want on this." Jonathan says. "You don't ever have to hide anything from me, Will. I mean that. Nothing, do you understand me? I'm your brother, I'm always going to believe in you, and I'll defend you to everyone in this world if I have to."

"I just feel like even more of a freak, with everything going on, you know? I mean, it's like I can't be normal in any way shape or form."

"Hey, remember what I told you. No one normal ever accomplished anything meaningful in this world, do you understand me?" he becomes more serious. "There's nothing wrong with being different from everyone else. We need different in this world, you know?"

"Yeah, yeah, I get it."

At least at the end of the day, he'll be on my side. I'm not quite ready to tell the others yet, but it does feel good having someone know.